

# Vital Issues Before City Tuesday

YOUR SECOND FRONT PAGE

## Torrance Herald

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TORRANCE, CALIFORNIA, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 24, 1957

Twenty-one

### \$3,000,000 In Recreation Bonds Sought by Torrance in Election

Torrance voters will be asked to approve a \$3,000,000 bond issue for recreation next Tuesday.

Of this amount, \$2,000,000 will go for acquisition of new park sites, while \$1,000,000 will be used for improvement of parks now owned by the city. The cost to the average taxpayer would be an additional \$4.50 a year, about a two per cent increase.

The reason for presentation of the bond issue at this time, according to city officials, is because the prices of land throughout the area are increasing so rapidly. Officials say the city must act now if it is not to pay prohibitive prices for park sites.

They cite the prices paid by the school district for its sites—\$2000 an acre in 1949; \$3000 in 1953; \$5200 in 1954; \$9000 in 1955; and \$14,000 in 1956. Prices have skyrocketed, they point out and seem to be continuing that trend.

A survey was made by Robert L. Gold, who was hired by the city, in which recommendations were made for a series of neighborhood parks, with a major park to be located in three sections of town—north, south, and central portions.

The Gold Report called for acquisition of some 254 acres of new land for parks in addition to the 87 acres now owned by the city. It set up recommendations for park sites in various parts of the city.

This report immediately became a source of controversy. The Recreation Commission studied the report and were working on a final report when the City Council decided to put the issue on the ballot and worked up its own report.

This led to the angry resignations of four commissioners—Chairman Herma Tillim, J. H. Paget, Mary Lee Boswell, and George Vico—who protested that the commission had been ignored and that the city should seek a \$5,000,000 bond issue instead of the \$3,000,000 requested.

The commissioners who resigned all are supporting the bond issue, however, on the theory that the city needs additional parks and park land even if they are not as big as the commission had sought.

The city council has tentatively agreed upon 11 sites which would be purchased with \$2,000,000 of the money sought in the bond issue. They total 132 acres. Three of these sites adjoin present city-owned land.

Mayor Albert Isen said at a recent council meeting that "the people will just have to trust us" on the exact location of the sites.

Present plans call for the location of major parks at the following locations:

1. North Torrance—190th St., between Crenshaw and Arlington, 25 acres. (Site 17 on accompanying map).
2. Central Torrance—Civic Center, 15 acres in addition to present city-owned land, 15 acres (Site 19).
3. South Torrance—Walteria Lake area northwest of Hawthorne and Pacific Coast Hwy., 42 acres. (Site 22).

These three major parks would include many types of

recreation facilities and would serve as centers for major community play activities. They would be in addition to a proposed 132 acre area sports center between Torrance and Del Amo Blvds., west of Henrietta St. Whether this center will be located in Torrance is still in doubt.

Present plans call for the purchase of land for small neighborhood parks at these locations:

1. 166th and Arlington, 6 acres (Site 14).
2. 178th and Western, 10 acres, adjoining a present brick pit which will be turned over to the city for parks (Site 15).
3. 186th and Prairie, 5 acres (Site 16).
4. "Somewhere in the Victor Tract" (Site 18).
5. Border and Plaza del Amo, 5 acres (Site 20).
6. 231st and Arlington, 6 acres (Site 21).
7. At the southern end of Madison St., 13 acres (Site 23).

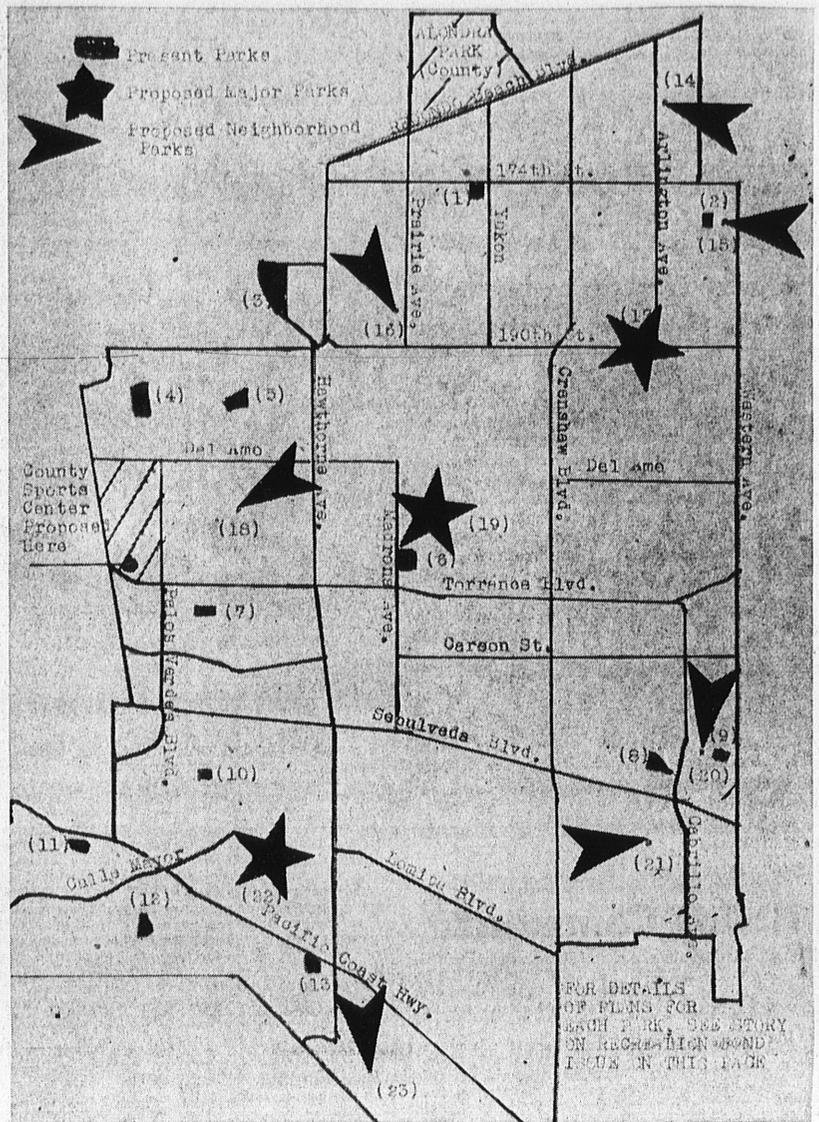
All of this land would be purchased at this time, but would not be developed until later.

Of the total amount sought, \$1,000,000 would go for improvement of sites presently owned by the city. Of this, \$175,000 would go for architectural and engineering fees and like expenses, while \$825,000 would be used for the actual site improvements.

The city council has not officially passed on any of the specific improvements for existing parks, but Recreation Director Harry Van Bellehne has presented the following recommendations:

1. McMaster Park, 174th and Yukon (5.4 acres)—Expansion of present recreation building, picnic area, night lighting, fencing, landscaping, and relocation of ball diamond, \$60,200 (Site 1).
2. Guenser Brick Pit, 178th and Western (3 acres)—Picnic area, playground, rest rooms, and landscaping, \$33,500 (Site 2).
3. El Nido Park, 182nd and Kingsdale (11 acres)—Nothing at this time, since the county recently turned the park over to the city, with improvements. (Site 3).
4. Sump area, Halison St. and Ronald Ave. (27 acres)—Nothing now, since plans must be developed for filling the sump. (Site 4).
5. La Romeria Park, Darien and Ingewood Ave. (5 acres)—community center, playground area, game courts, softball diamond, picnic shelter, landscaping, night lighting, \$131,000. (Site 5)
6. Civic Center (5 acres to be improved)—community and youth center building, picnic area, playground area, swimming pool deck and bleachers, night lighting, \$120,700. (Site 6)
7. Paradise Park, Evalyn and Lee St. (4.7 acres)—community center, playground area, game courts, softball diamond, picnic shelter, landscaping, night lighting, \$52,300. (Site 8)
9. Dump site, Plaza del Amo and Western (5 acres)—

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### Community Leaders Back Seven-Man Council Plan

Wholehearted support has been given to the Charter amendment calling for the election of a seven-man council.

City voters will go to the polls Tuesday to vote on the measure to increase the size

of the present five-man council. In addition the issue also calls for the election of a mayor by the voters.

If voters approve the amendment, the mayor will no longer be elected by his fellow councilmen, but will be chosen

directly by the people. Mayor Albert Isen reissued his official statement supporting the amendment, which was mailed to voters along with the sample ballot. Beyond reiterating the official statement, the mayor declined further comment:

"Torrance will soon reach the 100,000 mark in population. My experience as a councilman and mayor proves to me that more representation in city government will result in increasing the city council from five to seven men, one of whom will be elected by the voters as mayor. He will then be directly responsible to the voters rather than selected and serving at the pleasure of the majority of the council. A "Yes" vote for the charter amendment No. 2 is in my opinion in the interests of good government."

Nickolas Draie, city councilman:

"If the mayor is elected by the people he will be responsible to the people. Under the present situation, a man could be kept in office if he has the approval of only three councilmen. If the mayor is responsible to the people he can be removed by the people.

"By increasing the size of the council, more of the people's problems will be known. There will be more democratic representation."

Herma Tillim, former member of the city recreation commission:

"I am definitely in favor of the proposed amendment. With the growth of the community, the present five-man council can not possibly cover the entire area. With the addition of two members there will be a better chance for councilmen to specialize in certain phases of city problems.

"I also believe it's very important to have the people elect the mayor. This horse trading for the mayor's job can become a ridiculous situation."

### Board President Explains Value of Airport Bonds

Arguments that passage of the Airport Bond issue would bring heavy aircraft and jets to the field were strongly refuted this week by Airport Commission President Thomas B. Abrams.

Answering the arguments advanced by Richard Schroeder which are included in the ballot material mailed to Torrance voters last week, Abrams pointed out that a provision of the deed giving the airport property to the city restricted its use to airport purposes, and that the current bond issue is to provide increased safety factors for the field, not to increase the runway length or capacity.

"We may conclude that this area will always be an airport and . . . we should develop it into one of the finest, safest, and largest assets of this community," Abrams told the HERALD yesterday.

Arguments advanced for approval of the \$1,000,000 bond issue Tuesday include the value of the airport as an attraction for industry, to provide a site for draining Walteria Lake, and to qualify the

area for federal funds in acquiring land to clear approach zones at the field.

As an attraction to industry, city officials and others promoting the airport bond issue point out that it already has brought in such plants as Ryan Aeronautical, Vickers, Inc., Longren Aircraft, Hi-Shear Rivet and Tool, Sheridan-Gray, and others.

Drain Lake

Land to be acquired west of the present airport property will be cleared to permit safe landing and take-off operations at the field, and will provide a huge vacant area that could be used to drain Walteria Lake. To date, no other means of acquiring the property for this project has been offered.

Proper draining of the area west of Hawthorne Blvd. will permit reclamation of several hundred acres now subjected to inundation each year.

Acquisition of this land, if done now, can be done with federal aid. The Civil Aeronautics Authority has assured the city that it could qualify for the aid up to 54 per cent of the total cost of acquiring the approximately 79 acres of

land. Total cost of the land has been estimated at \$2 million.

No New Taxes

As taxpayers, the voters of Torrance will have to pay nothing toward retirement of the airport bond issue, city officials say. The issue will be repaid entirely from revenues at the airport—now accruing in an airport improvement fund. Throughout the years of the city's operation of the airport, the income has been sufficient to retire such a bond issue.

Proposed commercial development of the airport triangle, the Pacific Coast Hwy. frontage, and the ground leases for hangar spaces and other income producing developments will provide ample revenue to retire the bonds.



"Some minds are like concrete—all mixed up and permanently set!"



YOUNG FIREMEN (AND WOMAN) . . . Students became the "wheels" in the Torrance Fire Department Tuesday in honor of Junior Citizen's Day. Shown are student Fire Chief Ken Weeks, Secretary Sheila Hogan, Chief (for real) J. J. Benner, and student Battalion Chiefs Bill Hall and Glen Ayeock. The youngsters made a tour of all city fire facilities.



"Triumph is just 'umph added to 'try'."